

Appl. No. 10/017,627

Amdt. Dated August \_\_\_, 2003

Reply to Office Action of March 6, 2003

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**REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

Consideration is respectfully requested of the Official Action of March 6, 2003 relating to the above-identified application.

A petition for a two-month extension of time together with the associated fee is filed herewith.

The new claims presented herewith particularly point out and distinctly claim applicants' contribution to the art.

The rejection of the previous claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and 103 is now moot in view of the presentation of new claims. However, applicants will address the issues with respect to § 102 and § 103 in view of the applicants' older patent, US 5,496,439. Applicants' earlier patent describes a method for the recovery of cellulosic fibers from waste paper. The samples were subjected to one or more liquid impregnation cycles by immersing the sample in liquid under varying degrees of vacuum pressure environment followed by reapplication of atmospheric pressure. See col. 2, lines 2-45. The goal in applicants' earlier patent involved maximum penetration by the treating liquid; for example, water, without so great a vacuum as to irreversibly dry the paper fibers. Then, to ensure maximum penetration, evacuation of air was required of the air that was trapped in the interior of the waste material. See col. 3, lines 32-36. The cycle of the basic aspects of the earlier patent is shown in col. 6, beginning at line 31. Note that there is an emphasis on evacuation or using a vacuum system as the first step of the prior patent method.

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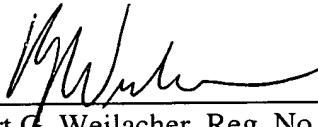
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Applicants' present invention emphasizes confining the waste material in a closed chamber where the waste material contains air and then carrying out a sequence of a first step of adding the additional beneficially treating fluid to the closed chamber to compress the air contained in the waste paper (instead of evacuating air as set forth in applicants' earlier patent) so that the air in the waste paper occupies less space. The space in the waste paper that is vacated by the air is then filled with additional beneficially treating fluid. The second step of the cycle involves withdrawing the beneficially treated fluid contained in the chamber utilizing the air compressed in the waste paper to expel or push out the beneficially treating fluid out from and through the waste paper. This is the distinction in the present invention over the earlier patent of applicants and applicants respectfully submit this is a patentable advance in the art neither described nor suggested by the earlier *Carlson, et al.* patent.

In view of the foregoing amendments, favorable action at the Examiner's earliest convenience is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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